technology for steel making and enhance the quality of Indian Steel.

Appraisal of CIS Export Prices

3051. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) London Metal Bulletin's bi-weekly appraisal FOB export prices of HR Coil for the month of October, November and December '98;

(b) whether the above includes MB's appraisal of CIS export prices; and

(c) if not, the reason therefor and MB's appraisal CIS export prices during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Government does not appriase the London Metal Bulletin's export prices. However, FOB prices of export of HR Coils from different countries as published in the London Metal Bulletin (bi-weekly) for the month of Oct. to Dec., 1998 were as under:

$/tonne(Average)

	European Mills	CIS countries
October '98	228	187
November '98	210	166
December '98	205	154

(c) Does not arrise in view of (a) above.

Import of Seconds and Defective Steel

3052. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Steel Ministry had requested the Commerce Ministry to take steps to remove import of seconds and defective below a certain floor price from OGL;

(b) if so, when was the request made;

(c) whether subsequently it was decided to fix the floor price for seconds and defective along with prime steel; and

(d) if so, the reasons for including prime steel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The recommendations for removal of seconds and defective steel items, below a floor price from OGL were made on 12th Nov. '98.

(c) and (d) The Working Group set up by the Finance Minister had inter alia also recommended fixed customs duty on certain steel items. However, during discussions on the subject with Ministry of Finance, the Department of Steel was advised to approach Ministry of Commerce for fixing floor prices for prime products also. Therefore, recommendations to this effect were also sent to the Ministry of Commerce.

Imported machinery under EPCG Scheme

3053. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the new generation private steel companies which have imported machinery under EPCG Scheme;

(b) the value of the import concessions obtained by the aforesaid companies under the above scheme;

(c) total value of the exports executed by these units so far; and

(d) shortfall, if any, and the time-frame by which the same is to be made up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) The names of the private steel companies which have imported machinery from 1991-92 onwards under various provisons of the EPCG Scheme are given in the statement attached. (*See* below) The CIF value of import licences issued to them is approximately Rs. 2580 Crores.

(c) and (d) As per provisions of Exim Policy, the import licence holders are required to fulfil export obligation over a period of time. Under the 15% and 10% duty concession of EPCG, the firms are required to complete the Export Obligation (EO) within a period of 5 years and under zero duty scheme over a period of 8 years. Zero duty scheme being put in practice only w.e.f. 1.4.95, the Export Obligation (EO) is expected to be fulfiled by 1.4.2003 and onwards. As per available information, the total value of exports executed so far is about Rs. 493 Crores.

Statement

1. M/s. Kalyani Steels Ltd.
2. M/s. Mukund Ltd.
3. M/s. Metalamen Pipe Mfg. Co. Ltd.
4. M/s. Tata Iron & Steel Co.
5. M/s. Sharpnex Engg.
6. M/s. Usha Martin Inds. Ltd.
7. M/s. National Steel Industries Ltd.
8. M/s. Bihar Alloy Steels Ltd.
9. M/s. Grandfoundry Ltd.
10. M/s. Ispat Profiles India Ltd.
11. M/s. Firth (India) Steel Co. Ltd.
12. M/s. Essar Gujarat Ltd.
13. M/s. Kusam Ingots and Alloys Ltd.
14. M/s. ISI Bars Ltd.
15. M/s. Gontermann Peipers (I) Ltd.
16. M/s. Sunflag Iron & Steel Co.
17. M/s. Vishnupriya Ind. Ltd.
18. M/s. Shri Precoated Steel Ltd.
19. M/s. Jindal Vijayanagr Steel
20. M/s. Sindia Steels Ltd.
21. M/s. Bhupendra Ind. Ltd.
22. M/s. Raymond Ltd.
23. M/s. Malvika Steel Ltd.
24. M/s. Nippon Denro Ltd.

Fall in prices of shares of SAIL

3054. SHRIAMTI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price to book value ratio of the sahres of Steel Authority of India. Ltd. the only public sector steel giant has drastically fallen from 1.3% in 1993 to 0.5% in 1998;

(b) if so, what are the contributing factors responsible for the fall and to what extent; and

(c) what steps have been taken to arrest the fall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Profitability of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been declining due to the environment of sluggish market conditon with greater competition from imports, weakening of international prices and over supply conditions in domestic market. These factors have put great stress on SAIL's margins due to which the market price of SAIL's share has declined. Profits of SAIL declined from Rs. 588 crores in 1996-97 to Rs. 149 crores in 1997-98. During the period April-December 1998, SAIL has reported a loss of Rs.890 crores.

(c) SAIL has taken the following steps for improving the performance:

* Greater emphasis on cost control measures.
* Introduction of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for employees.
* Market oriented production and product-mix.
* Improvement in techno-economic parameters.
* Increasing sales through aggressive and customer oriented marketing.
* Exploring new ways to bridge the resource gaps through business restructuring initiatives.